

This record is a partial extract of the original cable. The full text of the original cable is not available.

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 HARARE 000804

SIPDIS

AF/S FOR B. NEULING  
NSC FOR SENIOR AFRICA DIRECTOR C. COURVILLE

E.O. 12958: DECL: 12/31/2010

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [PHUM](#) [ZI](#)

SUBJECT: NO NEW DIRECTION IN MUGABE OPENING OF PARLIAMENT

Classified By: Charge d'Affaires a.i. Eric Schultz under Section 1.4 b/  
d

-----  
Summary  
-----

1. (SBU) President Mugabe's speech to the opening session of the new Parliament on June 9 projected familiar themes of western conspiracies and government intervention in the economy. It broke little new ground and reinforced that the GOZ was unlikely to relax its heavy-handedness in political, economic, or social spheres. Mugabe made no mention of the opposition, which boycotted the session in solidarity with the stay-away it was supporting with civil society organizations to protest the GOZ's Operation Restore Order (septel). END SUMMARY.

-----  
Anti-Imperialist Opening  
-----

2. (U) Mugabe opened his half-hour nationally broadcast speech with high praise for the conduct of Zimbabwe's recent parliamentary elections, which he cast as in compliance with SADC election principles. He thanked the broader international community for its unqualified endorsement of the elections as free and fair. Mugabe castigated the UK and the U.S. for their "shameless refusal" to join "international consensus" ) proof, he claimed, of their neo-colonial agenda to undermine Zimbabwe's sovereignty. He pledged to intensify Zimbabwe's relations with SADC members and Asian nations. Zimbabwe would work hard to reform the UN to stem the "excesses of a unipolar world where might prevails over right."

-----  
Changes in Constitution and Law Enforcement  
-----

3. (U) The President did not elaborate on the GOZ's highly publicized plans for constitutional amendments, other than to reiterate that they would provide for establishment of (1) a Senate, (2) a consolidated independent election commission, and (3) provisions for streamlining GOZ acquisition of land. To combat corruption, the GOZ would establish a new Anti-Corruption Commission and establish stiff mandatory penalties for illicit trade in currency and minerals. A Judicial Services Bill and an Attorney General Office's Bill would streamline the administration of justice and stem brain drain the legal sector.

-----  
Nothing New in Economic Priorities  
-----

4. (U) Turning to economic policy, Mugabe reported that the GOZ would eliminate the country's reliance on rain by putting nearly 600,000 hectares under irrigation. It would dedicate Z\$1 trillion (US\$110 million at the GOZ auction rate) to irrigation development, supplementing the existing GOZ commitment to make available Z\$5 trillion (US\$550 million) in concessionary loans for the agricultural sector. To stem inflation, the GOZ would establish a National Income and Salary Commission with unspecified authority.

5. (U) Mugabe painted rosy pictures of "strong recovery" in the tourism sector, progress in education, and unspecified new initiatives to attract investment and develop alternative fuels in the energy sector. The GOZ would introduce legislation to advance its indigenization objectives, including amendments to the Mine and Mineral Act. The GOZ would address urban ills through its Operation "Restore Order" (septels), unspecified amendments to the Urban and Rural Council Acts, and a Z\$12 trillion (US\$1.2 billion) municipal working capital fund. A corporate governance framework would turn around parastatals that he characterized as "opaque, bottomless receptacles." He reiterated the GOZ's priority on combating HIV/AIDS and pledged legislation to curb domestic violence and victimization of women and children.

-----

-----  
16. (SBU) None of the MDC's delegation of 41 attended the opening. Party Secretary-General Welshman Ncube told the Embassy it was boycotting the session, consistent with the June 9-10 stay-away it was supporting with civil society to protest Operation Restore Order. Also absent from the opening was independent MP and former Information Minister Jonathan Moyo, who reportedly was on an Air Zimbabwe flight that made an emergency landing at Johannesburg on June 8.

-----  
Comment  
-----

17. (C) There was little new or encouraging in this address. The prominent condemnation of the West contrasts with Mugabe's notably more moderate parliamentary opening last year and undoubtedly reflects pique at our condemnation of the election. Mugabe's portrayal of the economy and his economic prescriptions are pure fantasy. The huge municipal working capital fund, for example, was announced just before the March 31 election but none of the mayors we know have seen a dime of it nor do they have any expectation they will. Mugabe laid down the indigenization marker in last year's speech and it is not clear how or when the government intends to follow through on it. Nonetheless, its mere mention, like so much else in the speech and GOZ policy in general, underscores the government's penchant for micromanagement and its unwillingness to countenance any meaningful political or economic reforms.

18. (C) Recently rumored to be ill or dead, Mugabe appeared to be fit and steady in his delivery. Also rumored to be ill or dead, Vice President Joseph Msika joined fellow Vice President Joyce Mujuru in attendance.  
SCHULTZ